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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 168th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 9 January 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. PEREZ DE CUELLAR
(Secretary-General of the United Nations)

Chairman: Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.183/1990/L.1)

1. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia) said that 1989 had been a year of important international developments. The major Powers and the super-Powers had made further efforts to resolve their differences and promote peace and disarmament. The United Nations and the Secretary-General were to be commended for the role they had played in that regard. It was disappointing, therefore, to note that there had been no improvement in the situation of the Palestinian people over the past year. Its homeland continued to be occupied illegally by Israel, and in spite of the increased awareness of the question on the part of the international community there seemed to be little likelihood of a speedy comprehensive solution to the problem.

3. The Committee had done tremendous work in focusing the international community's attention on the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination. The General Assembly had again recognized the invaluable work carried out by the Committee in discharging its mandate. His delegation therefore wished to propose that Mrs. Diallo should be re-elected Chairman for another term. His Government was confident that under her very able guidance the Committee would continue to carry out successfully its very important tasks.

4. Mr. KARGBO (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation supported that proposal, and also wished to propose that Mr. Oramas Oliva (Cuba) and Mr. Noor (Afghanistan) should be re-elected Vice-Chairmen, and that Mr. Borg Olivier (Malta) should be re-elected Rapporteur.

5. Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that he supported the proposals made by the representatives of Malaysia and Sierra Leone. The Committee had a vital role to play in promoting the early convening of the international peace conference on the Middle East. In recent months there had been promising developments that could pave the way to such a conference, provided that all sides demonstrated a spirit of compromise and the necessary political will. There was good reason to hope that 1990 would be marked by a breakthrough towards peace in the Middle East.

6. The work of the Committee would be of great importance in that regard. The Committee should intensify its efforts to increase international awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine and should continue to give the highest priority to promoting the convening of the International Peace Conference. Priority should also be given to the task of ensuring the safety of the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. Lastly, he underscored the need to

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

achieve concrete results to promote peace and stability in the Middle East and protect the interests of the Palestinian people and all other peoples in the region.

7. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to re-elect the officers nominated by the representatives of Malaysia and Sierra Leone.

8. It was so decided.

9. Mrs. Diallo (Senegal) took the Chair.

10. The SECRETARY-GENERAL congratulated the Chairman and the other members of the Bureau on their re-election.

11. He attached great importance to the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East dispute so as to enable the Palestinian people to enjoy its inalienable rights. The Committee was resuming its work with a mandate renewed by decision of the General Assembly supported by an overwhelming majority of the Member States and in the context of continuing international efforts to bring the parties to the negotiating table.

12. The Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, the intifadah, which had entered its third year, remained a matter of serious international concern. In contrast to the nuances of the diplomatic process, the message of the intifadah was direct and unequivocal, namely that the Israeli occupation, which had been in effect for 22 years, would continue to be rejected and that the Palestinian people would remain committed to the exercise of its legitimate political rights, including self-determination. During the past year, confrontations involving Israelis and Palestinians had continued unabated, with much bloodshed. Hundreds had been killed and thousands wounded, including many children. Incarcerations on a large scale continued.

13. During the past year, he had repeatedly expressed concern at those widespread violations of human rights and had joined the Security Council and the General Assembly in calling upon Israel to abide by its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention. In that atmosphere, it seemed imperative that a way must be found to begin an effective negotiating process that could restore hope in the possibility of attaining just and durable peace.

14. The General Assembly in its resolution 44/42 had called once again for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, on an equal footing, and the five permanent members of the Security Council, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination. The General

(The Secretary-General)

Assembly had also invited the Security Council to consider measures needed to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, including the establishment of a preparatory committee. It also requested him to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, to facilitate the convening of the Conference.

15. During the past year, the United Nations had been intensely involved in activities to bring peace to troubled regions of the world. As everyone was all too well aware, the Middle East was an explosive area, and events or trends in one place almost invariably had repercussions elsewhere. His regret at the lack of progress in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict was all the greater, given the significant steps taken towards the resolution of other disputes. It was essential that a fully concerted and well co-ordinated effort should be made by the international community to help the parties enter into an effective negotiating process leading to comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. For his part, he would do all that he could to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to him in that regard.

16. The General Assembly had once again endorsed the recommendations of the Committee and had requested that he should continue to provide the Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its tasks and to provide the Division for Palestinian Rights with the necessary resources for the continuation of its programme of work.

17. There was general agreement that it was, to a large extent, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Committee that the rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people were now better understood and supported. He was pleased to note that the programme of regional seminars, information activities and meetings of non-governmental organizations, as well as the preparation of studies, publications and monitoring reports undertaken under the guidance of the Committee had helped increase knowledge of that question world-wide. He reaffirmed his full support to the Committee in all its endeavours to concert international efforts so as to enable the Palestinian people to regain its political rights which had been recognized and reaffirmed by the General Assembly.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that she viewed her re-election as a tribute to her country for its efforts to promote human rights and freedoms and bring about a world of peace, security and justice. Senegal had always supported the search for better ways to enable the Palestinian people to regain its national rights, particularly the right to self-determination and existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries in a free and independent State. Her country would maintain that commitment until the valiant Palestinian people was able to regain its homeland and live in peace.

19. She thanked the Secretary-General for the special interest which he attached to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and for personally opening the Committee's first meeting of 1990.

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(The Chairman)

20. Although for the Palestinian people 1989 had been 12 months marked by violence and the unprovoked killing of women, children and old people in the occupied territory, it had also been a time of encouraging developments in that people's struggle to achieve its legitimate aspirations. The intifadah had begun its third year at a time of increased determination on the part of the Palestinian people to regain its freedom and dignity.

21. The Committee could be proud that the General Assembly had adopted resolution 44/42, which called for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, by an overwhelming majority of 151 votes. In addition, more than 100 countries had now either recognized the State of Palestine or welcomed its proclamation. Another major and encouraging development was the fact that some Israeli political and labour leaders had openly expressed the view that the question of Palestine could be solved only through direct talks with the PLO. All the regional seminars and symposia organized by the Committee on the question of Palestine in 1989 had been a success, and the last one, recently held in Malaysia, had shown that international public opinion was even more solidly on the side of the Palestinian people.

22. It was obvious that the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all concerned parties on an equal footing, was one of the surest ways of bringing about true peace in the region. It was not Utopian to expect nations, and especially those in the Middle East, to live in peaceful coexistence. That could be done if all States found the moral and political courage to direct their efforts and resources towards satisfying the basic human needs of the people.

23. She hoped that, finally, 1990 would be the year in which the Committee's goals were accomplished, in which the valiant Palestinian people regained their freedom and dignity in an independent State of Palestine that was universally recognized and respected.

24. Mr. TERZI (Observer for Palestine), expressing the hope that 1990 would indeed see a just solution to the question of Palestine and an end to the violence there, said that the Committee, under its renewed leadership, was now better equipped to carry out its search for peace in view of the unprecedented support expressed for its work by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. It was further assisted by the Department of Public Information's mobilization of public opinion by reporting events as they occurred, a task that must be pursued until the obstacles to peace were overcome.

25. The Secretary-General withdrew.

26. Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Committee's accomplishments in the past year had undoubtedly increased the international community's esteem for its work, as evidenced by the statements made in the plenary Assembly and by the record support given to General Assembly resolution 44/42. Under the guidance of its re-elected officers, the Committee should now seek new

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

ways of achieving its goals, cognizant of the fact that the improved international climate had enabled other long-standing regional conflicts to be resolved. At the same time, it must maintain its contacts with concerned organizations, with the various movements of solidarity with the Palestinian people, and with the mass media, in order to heighten awareness of the issues.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.1)

27. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, introducing the draft programme of work for 1990 (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.1), said that it was a preliminary paper containing suggestions based on the past practice and decisions of the Committee, and on the important resolutions on the question of Palestine adopted at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. Those resolutions had been adopted by overwhelming majorities, the resolution relating to the International Peace Conference on the Middle East having obtained more votes than in any previous session. That showed the international community's determination to advance towards a negotiated settlement of the question and constituted a strong encouragement for the Committee to intensify its efforts to achieve that objective. The proposed programme of work for 1990 therefore once again gave priority to promoting the urgent convening of the International Peace Conference. In previous years, the work programme had been considered first by the Working Group of the Committee. Accordingly, he suggested that the Working Group should be re-established in order to consider the draft paper and make appropriate recommendations to the Committee.

28. The CHAIRMAN said that she would take it, if she heard no objection, that the Committee wished to re-establish the Working Group, under the chairmanship of Mr. Borg Olivier (Malta) and the vice-chairmanship of Mr. Jain (India).

29. It was so decided.

REPORT ON THE UNITED NATIONS ASIAN REGIONAL SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT KUALA LUMPUR FROM 18 TO 22 DECEMBER 1989

30. The CHAIRMAN said that the Seminar and the Symposium had been very successful events. The papers presented by the experts, the lively discussions on the various subjects, the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Seminar, and the declaration adopted by the NGO Symposium confirmed that assessment. She expressed, on behalf of the Committee, her profound thanks to the Government and people of Malaysia for so generously hosting the events and to the Malaysian officials who had participated for the important statements they had made.

31. The Kuala Lumpur Seminar and NGO Symposium marked the second time that the Committee had held a combined event for the governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental community in Asia. Their success again showed how action by Governments and grass-root organizations could be harmonized in pursuit of a common objective. The Seminar and the Symposium had held four joint meetings for panel presentations and discussions, and 13 panelists from the region, from the

(The Chairman)

Palestinian occupied territory and from the United States had presented papers on selected topics. The Committee delegation had held two very well-attended press conferences on the opening and closing days. The NGOs had also held several meetings and two workshops, and the Asian NGOs had formed a 12-member Asian Co-ordinating Committee on the Question of Palestine. The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Seminar and the declaration adopted by the NGO Symposium had taken into account the current, crucial stage in the struggle of the Palestinian people to regain its inalienable rights and provided a sound basis for action at the governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental levels.

32. The participants had welcomed the results of the nineteenth Extraordinary Session of the Palestine National Council, particularly the proclamation of the State of Palestine, as a contribution to a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict, and had also welcomed the position outlined by Mr. Arafat in his address to the United Nations General Assembly at Geneva. They had, in particular, stressed the significance of General Assembly resolution 44/42 calling for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

33. The participants had been of the view that the intifadah, a democratic expression of the collective will of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation, had given its struggle authenticity, moral force and an undeniable political maturity. They had considered that the position adopted by the PLO facilitated the movement towards peace, while the positions of the Government of Israel and one permanent member of the Security Council constituted obstacles to it, and they had called upon Israel to respond positively to international efforts aimed at a just and lasting political settlement.

34. The participants had emphasized that the scope of the dialogue between the United States and the PLO should be expanded to include consideration of substantive issues leading to meaningful political decisions between the two parties.

35. Mr. EL-SAID (Department of Public Information) said that the Department of Public Information (DPI) had conducted a number of activities in conjunction with the Seminar and the Symposium held in Kuala Lumpur in full co-operation with the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights. Prior to the meetings, it had issued a press release on the Seminar and the Symposium which had also been disseminated to all United Nations information centres in the Asia and Pacific region. It had also sent advance press kits, including several publications and posters dealing with relevant topics. DPI had provided daily press coverage of the meetings and issued press releases in New York. A radio officer from DPI had covered the meetings, dispatched radio programmes from Kuala Lumpur to the Asia and Pacific region and to New York, collected various materials to be used in future DPI programmes on the question of Palestine and interviewed panelists and participants.

(Mr. El-Said)

36. DPI had also shipped updated versions of the exhibit on the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the UNRWA exhibit to Kuala Lumpur, where they had been displayed at the meetings. DPI staff had attended the meetings and, in co-operation with the Malaysian Government, had contacted all local and foreign media there to mobilize the widest possible coverage. It had also invited 20 journalists from the Asia and Pacific region to cover the meetings, and press briefings had been arranged for them. Specialized screenings of United Nations and UNRWA films had been organized for both journalists and participants, and television clips and Malaysian television coverage had been obtained for possible United Nations television news and feature programmes on the question of Palestine. Relevant materials had also been collected and sent to the UN Chronicle for an article in its next issue. Lastly, DPI was in the process of compiling all press coverage materials of the meetings.

37. Mr. TERZI (Observer for Palestine) said that he greatly appreciated the way in which the Symposium had been presented on Malaysian television and asked the representative of Malaysia for a copy of the programme.

38. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia) said that the television coverage of the Symposium had been very successful and that the programme would be made available as soon as possible.

39. The CHAIRMAN said that if she heard no objection she would take it that the Committee decided to take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar and the declaration of the NGO Symposium, which would be annexed to its annual report to the General Assembly, and added that the report of those meetings would be published as a special bulletin of the Division for Palestinian Rights.

40. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

41. The CHAIRMAN reminded members that the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Seminar and NGO Symposium would be held in Buenos Aires from 5 to 9 February 1990, the provisional programme for which was contained in Working Paper No. 1. If she heard no objection she would take it that the Committee took note of Working Paper No. 1.

42. It was so decided.

43. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee's delegation to that meeting would consist of Mr. Oramas Oliva (Cuba) and Mr. Borg Olivier (Malta), as well as Mr. Terzi (Palestine) and herself. Consultations were proceeding with a view to completing the delegation with the addition of one or two other members.

44. She also reminded members that the Sierra Leonean Government had agreed to host the United Nations African Regional Seminar and NGO Symposium on the question of Palestine in Freetown from 2 to 6 April 1990, and she noted that consultations

(The Chairman)

and preparations for the meetings had begun and that a planning mission from the Secretariat was already in Freetown. The Bureau would submit a report in due course. She further announced that Sweden had agreed to hold the European regional seminar in Stockholm at a date to be announced.

45. Lastly, she noted that the Division for Palestinian Rights had prepared a draft study on Palestinian children and had submitted it to the Committee in November 1989. Since the Division had not received any proposals for amendment from the Committee, the study would soon be published.

46. Mr. DIAKITE (Mali) said he wished to draw attention to the need to extend consultations on the work of the Committee to all delegations and to the need for the Secretariat to make a major effort to ensure that all documents were available to all members of the Committee in the working languages.

47. Mr. TERZI (Observer for Palestine) said that the workload of the Division for Palestinian Rights had increased greatly with the increase in the number of NGOs and that the Committee and the Secretariat should consider restructuring the Division in order to enable it to cope with its increased responsibilities.

48. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, supported by the Chairman, said that he endorsed that suggestion, which should be taken up by the Working Group with a view to making recommendations.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 169th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 2 March 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal)

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Draft programme of work for 1990

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Report on the Latin American and Caribbean Seminar and NGO Symposium held at Buenos Aires from 5 to 9 February 1990

African Seminar and NGO Symposium to be held at Freetown, Sierra Leone, from 2 to 6 April 1990

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The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIRMAN

2. The CHAIRMAN said that, if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Alarcón de Quesada (Cuba) a Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. ZAMORA (Cuba) expressed gratitude on behalf of Mr. Alarcón de Quesada (Cuba) for his election as a Vice-Chairman and said that the Cuban delegation would continue to do everything possible in order to achieve the objectives of the Committee.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 1990 (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.1/Rev.1)

5. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, said that the Working Group had considered the first draft of the programme of work at a meeting in January 1990. There had been a useful exchange of views on the various activities to be held under the auspices of the Committee in 1990, in view of the continuing intifadah in the occupied Palestinian territory and the urgent need to break the current deadlock and arrive at a negotiated solution to the question of Palestine in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. The revised draft programme of work (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.1/Rev.1) took into account the comments made in the Working Group and had already been distributed to the members of the Committee.

6. At its meeting on 9 January 1990, the Committee had briefly exchanged views on the increase in the tasks performed by the Division for Palestinian Rights and had requested the Working Group to consider that matter and formulate suitable recommendations. At its meeting on 18 January, the Working Group had considered the question, taking into account the relevant information. The Working Group had taken note of the fact that over the past three years the work-load of the Division had increased considerably, particularly with regard to its work with non-governmental organizations. With the establishment of regional NGO co-ordinating committees, the Division now had to deal with six such committees on a regular basis. The number of non-governmental organizations on the mailing list had risen from about 100 in 1983 to over 850.

7. Owing to the intifadah, the volume of the monitoring reports, bulletins and publications issued by the Division had increased. Furthermore, in the past two years, the Committee had received additional assistance from the Division in a number of areas. The Working Group had also taken note of the fact that, in accordance with the responsibilities entrusted to the Committee by the General

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

Assembly, the Committee planned to intensify its efforts to heighten public and official awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine and promote the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. The Working Group had concluded that, subject to the Committee's approval, the Chairman should bring that matter to the attention of the Secretary-General and request him to take such action as he might consider appropriate to strengthen and restructure the Division for Palestinian Rights so that it might continue to discharge its mandate fully and more effectively in consultation with and under the guidance of the Committee.

8. Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that his delegation fully supported the programme of work for 1990, which focused on concrete steps to promote the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and ensure the safety of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. The German Democratic Republic would continue to participate actively in the work of the Committee to safeguard the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and thus bring about a settlement of the Middle East conflict as a whole. All sides must demonstrate the necessary political will and a sense of realism in that regard in order to start the negotiating process. Lastly, he once again expressed his country's firm solidarity with the Palestinian people.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that, if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft programme of work for 1990.

10. It was so decided.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with established practice, the Bureau would continue to meet whenever necessary in order to finalize the arrangements for the various activities to be organized by the Division for Palestinian Rights. As proposed by the Working Group, she would convey to the Secretary-General the Committee's concern regarding the increase in the work of the Division and the need to provide the Division with adequate staffing resources.

12. It was so decided.

13. Mr. TERZI (Observer for Palestine), referring to paragraph 12 of the programme of work for 1990, stressed the importance of the visits to the capitals of States members of the Security Council, in particular the five permanent members, in order to promote intensified efforts towards the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. The draft study on Palestinian children, referred in paragraph 26, should be available for consideration at the UNICEF World Summit for Children to be held in the spring of 1990. Referring to paragraph 29 (e) on "Israeli settlements in Gaza and in the West Bank (including Jerusalem)", he inquired whether the Secretariat could provide the Committee with updated information for its consideration of the question of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. His delegation was alarmed at the statements made by the Government of Israel that settlements were required for State security. That was a further

(Mr. Terzi, Observer, Palestine)

obstacle to the process under way to promote the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

14. Mr. MIRZA (Chief, Division for Palestinian Rights) said that the draft study on Palestinian children would be available in time for the UNICEF World Summit for Children. The Division gave priority to the question of Israeli settlements in Gaza and in the West Bank and would try to complete the study as soon as possible and submit it to the Committee with all the relevant information.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat would do everything to ensure that the members of the Committee received all the necessary information and documentation. She would take into account all the pertinent aspects of the question in her statement to be made on behalf of the Committee to the Security Council.

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN ON THE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN NGO SYMPOSIUM HELD IN NEW YORK ON 22 AND 23 JANUARY 1990

16. The CHAIRMAN said that the Preparatory Planning Meeting for the 1990 North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine had been held on 22 and 23 January 1990 at United Nations Headquarters, and the Committee delegation to the Meeting, which she had had the honour to head, included the other members of the Bureau, Ambassador Oscar Oramas-Oliva (Cuba) and Ambassador Noor Ahmad Noor (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Ambassador Alexander Borg Olivier (Malta), the Committee's Rapporteur, and Mr. Zuhdi L. Terzi (Observer for Palestine). The Preparatory Meeting had been attended by members of the North American Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC), who had been elected by the North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, held in New York in 1989.

17. At the request of NACC, invitations had been extended to the representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to brief the NGOs on the activities of their respective organizations with regard to the Palestinian people living in the occupied Palestinian territory.

18. In her statement, she had emphasized that the Committee's priority objective was to intensify its efforts to bring about the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/42. She had stressed the Committee's desire to improve its co-operation with the North American NGO community and to seek ways and means of reaching out more effectively to the North American public, for example by participating in NGO-sponsored conferences outside New York City.

(The Chairman)

19. The Committee delegation had had an opportunity to exchange views with the members of NACC on the draft programme which NACC had proposed for the NGO Symposium, and Working Paper No. 2 was the result of that joint effort. In Working Paper No. 2, it had been proposed that the first panel should stress the need for breaking the impasse and moving towards Palestinian-Israeli peace. That panel would consider the various dimensions of the peace process from the perspective of the international community, Palestinian policy, Israeli government policy, United States government policy and United States-Israeli relations, and it would be addressed by speakers directly involved in each of those areas. The second panel would consist of Palestinians from the occupied territory and an Israeli from the peace movement and would provide updated information on the intifadah.

20. A number of workshops had also been proposed. The workshops would focus on organizing specific constituencies in North America around issues of particular concern, such as settlements, immigration, human rights violations with particular attention to children, and United States aid to Israel. Persons from the occupied territory and from the relevant United Nations agencies would be invited to contribute their expertise to those workshops.

21. In view of the many administrative arrangements that the Secretariat would have to undertake, she suggested that the Committee should approve Working Paper No. 2 as a whole in order to enable the Secretariat to begin preparations for the Symposium.

22. It was so decided.

REPORT ON THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM HELD AT BUENOS AIRES FROM 5 TO 9 FEBRUARY 1990

23. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, said that the Committee delegation which had attended the United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Regional Seminar and NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, held at Buenos Aires from 5 to 9 February 1990, had been composed of Mr. Oscar Oramas-Oliva (Cuba), Vice-Chairman of the Committee and leader of the delegation, who had acted as Seminar Chairman; Mr. Dragoslav Pejić, Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia, who had served as Vice-Chairman; Mr. Zuhdi L. Terzi, Permanent Observer for Palestine; and himself, who had served as Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur.

24. The Seminar and the Symposium had been very successful. The papers presented by the experts were of the highest quality and had led to lively discussions on the various subjects, and all participants had expressed the greatest satisfaction at the results of the meeting. That had been the first time that the Committee had held a combined event for the governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental community of the Latin American and Caribbean region. It had also been the first time that the Committee had organized a symposium for NGOs in that region. The Seminar and the Symposium had held four joint meetings for panel presentations and discussions on the following topics: the urgency of convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East; the intifadah in the occupied Palestinian

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

territory and its impact on the achievement of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict; the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the social, cultural, economic and political development of the Palestinian people; and the mobilization of public opinion in the Latin American and Caribbean region for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

25. Fourteen eminent panelists from the region, as well as from Israel, the Palestinian occupied territory, Spain and from NGO co-ordinating committees had presented papers on those topics, which had been followed by lively and interesting discussions. Time had also been set aside for several NGO meetings. Two NGO workshops had met to discuss the topics "Mobilization and networking by NGOs to ensure the protection of, and promote assistance to, the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation" and "NGO activities to further mobilize public opinion for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people". Seven resource persons had shared their expertise regarding the needs of the Palestinian people under occupation and the possibilities for NGO action with the participating NGOs.

26. The Seminar and Symposium had aroused a great deal of interest and had received substantial press and television coverage. A large number of participants had attended the meetings, including representatives of 34 Governments, Palestine, various United Nations bodies and international organizations and 27 NGOs accredited to the Committee. Several other NGOs had also attended the proceedings as members of the public.

27. The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Seminar and the Declaration of the NGO Symposium were balanced and constructive documents; at the same time, they were permeated by a sense of urgency and anxiety over the continuing stalemate in the peace process. They took account of the current, crucial stage in the struggle of the Palestinian people to attain its inalienable rights and provided a sound basis for action at the governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental levels.

28. The participants in the workshops had considered modalities for joint action by Latin American and Caribbean NGOs and had committed themselves to undertaking various projects in solidarity with the Palestinian people. The NGOs had been able to establish a co-ordinating committee for the Latin American and Caribbean region, which would facilitate contacts and exchanges in future.

29. The Declaration of the NGO Symposium and the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar had been circulated by the Secretariat. If the Committee agreed, they would be annexed to the annual report of the Committee to the General Assembly, and the report of the Seminar and NGO Symposium would be issued in due course as a publication of the Division for Palestinian rights.

30. It was so decided.

31. Mr. EL-SAID (Department of Public Information) said that the Department of Public Information had organized the North and Latin American and Caribbean Regional Journalists' Encounter on the Question of Palestine at Buenos Aires from 12 to 14 February 1990. About 35 high-level journalists from North and Latin America and the Caribbean region, including a number of Argentine journalists, had attended.

32. The Encounter had proved very successful in achieving its purpose. The debates had been lively, frank and objective. All participants had praised the United Nations for taking the responsibility for disseminating balanced and impartial information on the subject. Most had expressed the view that the participation of an official Israeli representative would have been more stimulating. The moderator had explained to them that the Department of Public Information had repeatedly invited Israeli officials to participate in the United Nations public information activities on the question of Palestine but that they had declined.

33. In addition, three national journalists' encounters on the question of Palestine had been held at Mexico City, on 2 February; at Santiago, on 15 February; and at Port of Spain, on 20 February 1990. The purpose of the encounters had been to provide an opportunity for the largest possible number of local journalists and foreign correspondents to meet with experts on the subject for a brief discussion of the various aspects of the Palestinian question. An average of 40 to 60 journalists, foreign correspondents, senior officials, foreign diplomats and NGO representatives had attended each encounter. National television had covered the encounters and had interviewed the panelists individually.

34. A new series of national encounters would be held at Oslo, London, Belgrade, Tokyo, Manila, Bangkok and New Delhi. The Asian and Pacific Regional Journalists' Encounter would be held at Singapore from 26 to 28 March 1990.

AFRICAN SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM TO BE HELD AT FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, FROM 2 to 6 APRIL 1990

35. The CHAIRMAN said that a planning mission of the United Nations Secretariat had visited Freetown in early January, and the Bureau had proceeded with a number of arrangements, including initial selection of panelists and contacts with the African NGOs, in order to ensure the success of the event. The result of the Bureau's preparatory work was before the Committee in Working Paper No. 3. If there were no other comments, she would take it that the Committee wished to take note of Working Paper No. 3.

36. It was so decided.

37. The Chairman said that the Bureau would continue with further preparations and would keep the Committee informed of developments. The delegation of the Committee to the African Regional Seminar and NGO Symposium would consist of Mr. Alexander Borg Olivier (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee; Mr. Guennadi Oudovenko, Permanent Representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist

(The Chairman)

Republic, Mr. Tom Ogbaleh Kargbo, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, Mr. Zuhdi L. Terzi, Permanent Observer for Palestine; and herself.

OTHER MATTERS

38. Mr. TERZI (Observer for Palestine) said that the Government of the United States had issued a report on violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation, and he suggested that the Committee should consider circulating it as a document of the General Assembly and Security Council.

39. The CHAIRMAN thanked the observer for Palestine and said that the Committee would take the appropriate steps. She said the Preparatory Meeting for the International NGO Meeting was scheduled to be held at Geneva on 26 and 27 March 1990. The meeting would be attended by members of the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, who would draft a programme for the International NGO Meeting and European NGO Symposium to be held at Geneva from 27 to 31 August 1990, in consultation with the Committee delegation.

40. The Government of Sweden had agreed to the holding of the European Regional Seminar at Stockholm from 7 to 11 May 1990. A planning mission of the United Nations Secretariat was due to visit Stockholm the following week. The Bureau had begun preparations in consultation with the Permanent Mission of Sweden and the Division for Palestinian Rights.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 170th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 1 May 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal)

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European Regional Seminar on the Question of Palestine, Stockholm, 7-11 May 1990

North American Regional Seminar on the Question of Palestine, New York, 25 and 26 June 1990

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Any corrections to the record of this meeting and of other meetings will be issued in a corrigendum.

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United Nations-sponsored Asian regional and national journalists encounters on the question of Palestine for 1990

Other matters

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN ON THE AFRICAN REGIONAL SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, FROM 2 TO 6 APRIL 1990

2. The CHAIRMAN said that the United Nations African Regional Seminar and NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine had been a great success. At the opening session, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone had made a statement, and messages from the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization had been read out.

3. The participants had deplored the fact that the Israeli authorities had denied a travel permit to Mr. Abu-Alnassir, who had been invited to serve as a panelist; they had subsequently decided to send a message conveying their regret to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel. The meeting had revealed that much could be done to mobilize non-governmental organizations in Africa and had proved that action by Governments and grass-roots organizations could be harmonized in pursuit of a common objective. Sixteen eminent panelists from Africa, Israel, the occupied Palestinian territory, Ireland and NGO co-ordinating committees had discussed the following topics: "The urgency of convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East"; "The intifadah in the occupied Palestinian territory and its impact on the achievement of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict"; "The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the social, cultural, economic and political development of the Palestinian people"; and "The mobilization of public opinion in the African region for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people". Time had also been set aside for several meetings of non-governmental organizations, including two workshops on the topics "mobilization and networking by NGOs to ensure the protection of, and to promote assistance to, the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation" and "NGO activities to further mobilize public opinion for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people". Seven resource persons had also shared their expertise regarding the needs of the Palestinian people and opportunities for NGO action.

4. Both the Seminar and the Symposium had aroused a great deal of interest and had received press coverage. The conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar and the Symposium Declaration were balanced and constructive documents which nevertheless reflected a high level of concern at the continued stalemate in the peace process. The documents also reflected the current crucial stage of the Palestinian people's struggle to attain its inalienable rights and afforded a sound basis for action at all levels.

(The Chairman)

5. The participants had expressed support for the proclamation of the State of Palestine, the Palestinian peace initiative and the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. They had taken the view that, as a result of those and subsequent developments, conditions at present were more favourable to a political solution, and that the opportunity should not be allowed to slip by. They had voiced great concern at the accelerating deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and had expressed their determination to work together for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East on the basis of General Assembly resolution 44/42. They had also expressed support for proposals aimed at protecting Palestinians in the occupied territory and providing them with assistance as well as for other measures intended to secure Israel's compliance with the fourth Geneva Convention and United Nations resolutions.

6. Representatives of the Committee attending the Symposium had been greatly encouraged by the participants' readiness to contribute to efforts to promote the process of reconciliation and to enhance the negotiating climate. Workshop participants had considered modalities for joint action by African non-governmental organizations and had pledged to undertake various projects in solidarity with the Palestinian people. The term of office of the current members of the Co-ordinating Committee for the African region had been extended for two years and a new member, from Sierra Leone, had been appointed.

7. The conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar and the Symposium Declaration would be annexed to the Committee's annual report to the General Assembly. The report of the two meetings would eventually be issued as a publication of the Division for Palestinian Rights.

8. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar and of the Symposium Declaration.

9. It was so decided.

REPORT ON THE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL NGO SYMPOSIUM AND INTERNATIONAL NGO MEETING, HELD AT GENEVA ON 26 AND 27 MARCH 1990

10. Mr. JAIN (India) said that the Preparatory Meeting had been attended by all the members of the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ICCP), four representatives of non-governmental organizations from the occupied Palestinian territory and two special representatives of the European Co-ordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine.

11. At the Meeting, non-governmental organizations had presented a detailed report outlining the situation obtaining in the occupied Palestinian territory and analysing the Palestinian response to the ongoing crisis there. At the request of ICCP, invitations had been extended to representatives of a number of specialized

(Mr. Jain, India)

agencies; ILO, UNCHS, UNCTAD, UNESCO and WHO had sent representatives to the Meeting. UNDP and UNRWA had been unable to attend owing to financial constraints, but had made available copies of their latest reports on assistance to the Palestinian people. The information provided by those bodies had been very useful indeed.

12. The members of ICCP and the European Co-ordinating Committee had met both together and separately to elaborate draft programmes for the European NGO Symposium and the International NGO Meeting to be held from 27 to 28 August and 29 to 31 August 1990 respectively. The drafts had also been the subject of consultations with, and had been revised in the light of comments by, representatives of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Working papers Nos. 4 and 5, which were before the Committee, represented the outcome of those deliberations, and he recommended them for approval. Drawing attention to the list of panels and panelists included in working paper No. 4, he said it had been necessary to recommend a rather large group of panelists for the second panel, entitled "Two peoples, two States: Europe's contribution to achieving peace", in order to reflect the Israeli point of view, the Palestinian position and the perceived role and contribution of Europe in the implementation of United Nations resolutions calling for the establishment of a Palestinian State. The working paper also listed the four workshops that would be held concurrently during the Symposium.

13. Working paper No. 5, which contained the draft programme of the Seventh International NGO Meeting, listed the topics of the four panel discussions to be held and the panelists who would participate in them as well as the nine workshops which would be held during the meeting. ICCP attached special significance to the workshop on the role of United Nations agencies in the occupied Palestinian territory, which would also address ways in which co-operation with non-governmental organizations involved in programmes of assistance to the Palestinian people could be established or improved. In that connection, a request had been made to have a larger number of representatives of Palestinian non-governmental organizations participate so that avenues of communication between those NGOs, United Nations bodies having assistance programmes for the Palestinian people and other NGOs with similar support programmes could be established and strengthened. Provision had also been made for regional caucuses on selected topics.

14. Once again the Committee was being asked to approve the names of panelists and resource persons listed in the working paper, on the understanding that additional names would be proposed at a later stage. The Division for Palestinian Rights would ascertain the availability of the individuals suggested, and the officers of the Committee would bear in mind that the United Nations had been authorized to fund six invitations to the European Symposium and 15 to the International Meeting. Since the workshops provided opportunities for non-governmental organizations to interact, those organizations wanted the Committee to invite more panelists and resource persons from both the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel. During the Preparatory Meeting, representatives of the Committee and the

(Mr. Jain, India)

Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights had held useful consultations with the chairmen of the African, Asian, American and Caribbean regional Co-ordinating Committees regarding their respective programmes of work.

15. The Committee should consider taking steps to ensure that the views of all parties, including Israel, were represented at the various meetings it held throughout the world, particularly as the official views of Israel were often not represented at such forums. In doing so, the Committee would provide an additional opportunity for exchanges of views and increase the chances of reaching a peaceful, comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine.

16. The non-governmental organizations would like the Committee to invite Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and either Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, or Mr. Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the African National Congress of South Africa, or both, to attend the International Meeting.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that, if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee agreed to adopt the programmes for the European Regional NGO Symposium and the International NGO Meeting as formulated at the Geneva Preparatory Meeting and set out in working papers No. 4 and No. 5. She would also take it that the Committee would take into consideration the request that invitations should be extended to Mr. Arafat, Mr. Nujoma and Mr. Mandela and the suggestion that all points of view, including the official Israeli Government position, should be represented at meetings of the Special Committee.

18. It was so decided.

EUROPEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, STOCKHOLM, 7-11 MAY 1990

19. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the final programme for the seminar, which was contained in working paper No. 6, and announced that the Committee's delegation to the Seminar would be composed of Mr. Borg Olivier (Rapporteur), Mr. Pejic (Yugoslavia), Mr. Terzi (Observer for Palestine), and the Chairman.

20. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to approve the contents of working paper No. 6.

21. It was so decided.

NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, NEW YORK, 25 AND 26 JUNE 1990

22. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the provisional programme of the Seminar, contained in working paper No. 7, and said that, if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to approve the provisional programme.

23. It was so decided.

NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, NEW YORK, 27-29 JUNE 1990

24. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the status report on preparations for the Symposium, recalling that the Committee had approved the programme contained therein at its 169th meeting.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS BY NGOS FOR ACCREDITATION WITH THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

25. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the past few months, the Committee had received applications for accreditation from over 100 NGOs, a list of which could be found in working paper No. 8. The applications had all been endorsed by either ICCP or by the relevant regional Co-ordinating Committee and had also been examined by the Secretariat.

26. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to approve the applications of the NGOs listed in working paper No. 8.

27. It was so decided.

UNITED NATIONS-SPONSORED ASIAN REGIONAL AND NATIONAL JOURNALISTS ENCOUNTERS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE FOR 1990

28. Mr. EL-SAID (Department of Public Information) said that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/41 C of 6 December 1989, the Asian and Pacific Regional Journalists Encounter on the Question of Palestine had been held in Singapore from 26 to 28 March 1990. The objective of the encounter had been to promote better understanding of the Palestinian question on the part of leaders of the regional media by enabling them to hear the views of and engage in candid discussion with experts on the subject. A panel of experts had been invited to address the journalists with a view to providing them with objective and balanced perspectives on the topic. The Israeli Government had been invited to appoint a panelist but had declined to do so. Twenty-three high-level journalists, selected to represent the Asian and Pacific regions and to achieve a balance between representatives of press, radio and television, had participated in the encounter and several local journalists and foreign diplomats based in Singapore had also attended.

29. National journalists encounters on the question of Palestine had been held in Oslo, on 9 March; London, on 13 March; Belgrade, on 16 March; Tokyo, on 19 March; Manila, on 21 March; Bangkok, on 23 March and New Delhi, on 30 March 1990. The purpose of those encounters had been to enable the largest possible number of foreign correspondents and local journalists to meet with small, balanced panels of experts, in a press-conference format. An average of 40 to 60 journalists, NGO representatives, senior officials and foreign diplomats had attended each of the national encounters. Local television and radio stations had covered the encounters and interviewed the panelists.

(Mr. El-Said)

30. The regional and national encounters had been quite successful, and he expressed his deep appreciation to the Governments of the countries that had hosted the encounters and to the panelists.

31. During 1990, the Department of Public Information planned to continue its publications programme by bringing out two booklets. The first, The UN and the Question of Palestine, was an updated version of an earlier edition dealing with the history and various aspects of the Palestinian question. The second dealt with United Nations efforts to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East and set out the positions of the parties involved. Both booklets would be printed in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

32. Preparations for the annual news mission to the Middle East, which would take place from 14 May to 1 June 1990, were virtually complete. An official request to visit Israel and the West Bank had been sent to the Mission of Israel to the United Nations, but no response had been received as yet.

OTHER MATTERS

33. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that, during its visit to the United Nations on 30 April 1990, a delegation of European parliamentarians had met with the Bureau of the Committee, resulting in a fruitful exchange of views.

34. Mr. TERZI (Observer for Palestine) said that, in deciding to circulate the United States report on violations of human rights in the occupied territories, the Committee had not intended to draw attention to human rights violations in general but rather to address the issue of violations by an occupying Power. Israel was the only Member of the United Nations which had been branded as an occupying Power within the context of the fourth Geneva Convention and crimes perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people were therefore much more serious than alleged violations of human rights in other countries. Consequently, the occupying Power, in requesting publication of violations of human rights in general, was conducting a campaign of slander against the members of the Committee.

35. The practices and policies of the occupying Power vis-à-vis the Palestinian people constituted violations of human rights and required the immediate attention of the Security Council. It was high time the Council addressed the issue with sincerity and determination. The Committee should become more active in that area. Committee members who were also members of the Security Council should put pressure on that body to take appropriate action.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that, on behalf of the Committee, she had always informed both the Secretary-General and the Security Council of any escalation in the repression and violence perpetrated by the occupying Power on the peoples in the occupied territories and had done so again that very day. Committee members who were also members of the Security Council would, as in the past, continue to accord the highest priority to that matter.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.